

Message Text

SECRET

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11
ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SP-02 PM-03 L-01 INR-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 IO-03 ISO-00 /040 W
----- 128366

O P 020238Z MAY 75
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2846
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
USLO PEKING PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY
CINCPAC PRIORITY

S E C R E T MANILA 5702

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XC, US
SUBJECT: ASEAN CONSULTATIONS WITH US

REF: JAKARTA 5162

1. ALTHOUGH I APPRECIATE MOTIVATION OF AMBASSADOR NEWSOM'S
SUGGESTION REFTEL THAT SECRETARY ADDRESS LETTERS TO
INDIVIDUAL FOREIGN MINISTERS IN THIS AREA SOLICITING THEIR
VIEWS ON CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS, I STRONGLY RECOMMEND
AGAINST IT.

2. IN FIRST PLACE NONE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS CONCERNED IS
LIKELY TO HAVE WELL-CONCEIVED THOUGHTS ON SUCH A COMPLEX
SUBJECT, AND SOME OF THEM, SUCH AS CHATCHAI AND ROMULO, WOULD
PREDICTABLY COMMIT GLIB AND SUPERFICIAL OBSERVATIONS TO
OFFICIAL LETTERS WHICH WE WOULD HAVE SOME DIFFICULTY IN
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ERASING.

3. IN SECOND PLACE, IT SEEMS ALTOGETHER PREMATURE FOR ANY RESPONSIBLE OBSERVER TO HAVE USEFUL VIEWS ON CURRENT SITUATION. WE SHOULD WAIT FOR SEVERAL DEVELOPMENTS TO EVOLVE BEFORE WE ASK OUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES FOR THEIR VIEWS.

AMONG THESE ARE:

- A. POSITION LAO DONG LEADERSHIP WILL TAKE WITH RESPECT NEW GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE IN SOUTH VIET-NAM.
- B. LAO DONG SUCCESS IN SUBDUING SOME SOUTH VIETNAMESE GROUPS, SUCH AS CATHOLICS AND BUDDHISTS, WHO ARE SKILLED IN RESISTANCE.
- C. POSITION LAO DONG WILL TAKE WITH RESPECT TO UNIFICATION NORTH AND SOUTH VIET-NAM.
- D. ATTITUDE OF PRG, OR NEW SOUTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY, TOWARDS RECOGNITION OF OTHER SOUTHEAST ASIAN STATES (THERE IS STRONG POSSIBILITY OF BRUTAL REBUFF TO THOSE FAWNING EARLY RECONCILIATION).
- E. ATTITUDE OF LAO DONG CONTROLLED STATES TOWARDS ASEAN (PROBABLY SHARP CRITICISM).
- F. EVOLUTION OF ATTITUDES BETWEEN PEKING AND LAO DONG LEADERSHIP, AND PEKING ATTITUDE TOWARDS U.S. PRESENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.
- G. EVOLUTION OF PEKING-MOSCOW CONFRONTATION IN INDOCHINA.

4. BECAUSE OF THESE COMPLEX IMPONDERABLES, IT WOULD SEEM MORE PRUDENT AT THIS TIME TO COUNSEL PATIENCE AND CAUTION TO OUR SOUTHEAST ASIAN FRIENDS RATHER THAN STIMULATING THEIR IMAGINATION BY SOLICITING UNSTRUCTURED VIEWS. WASHINGTON WILL PRESUMABLY HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO DO THIS WITH AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, AND SINGAPORE IN COURSE NEXT WEEK'S VISITS. AMBASSADOR NEWSOM HAS MADE SOME PROGRESS WITH MURDANI AND EVEN PERHAPS WITH MALIK. I HAVE ASKED THAT MARCOS RESTRAIN ROMULO. IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT WE WILL FIND A WAY TO GET THE WORD ALSO TO RAZAK AND CHATCHAI BEFORE THE ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING IN ORDER TO AVOID HASTY PROCLAMATIONS FROM THAT FORUM.

5. IN SHORT, THERE IS QUITE A BIT OF DUST THAT NEEDS TO SETTLE BEFORE A VALID REASSESSMENT CAN BE MADE. IT IS DOUBTFUL IF EVENTS WILL BE ADEQUATELY CLEAR FOR EVALUATION

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FOR THREE OR FOUR MONTHS. I BELIEVE, IN THE MEANTIME, THAT OUR BEST COURSE OF ACTION IS MERELY TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION WITH OUR FRIENDS, THEREBY EDUCATING THEM TO FACT THAT SITUATION IS COMPLICATED AND HOPEFULLY AVOIDING ANY SIMPLISTIC REACTIONS.

SULLIVAN

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